considering the views/points expressed by the Supreme Court in one of the Judgement in the state of West Bengal Versus Falguni Datta; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard, if not, what are the specific reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present to amend Essential Commodities Act. However, the details regarding this judgement have been called for from the Government of West Bengal.

Export of Edible Oil

2434. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced its plan to permit the export of edible oil in consumer packs;

(b) whether this decision of export of edible oil was arrived at taking advantage of low price of edible oil prevailing in the market and promotion of export of value added agricultural items;

(c) if so, to what extent the edible oil was exported and the what extent it helped the Government; and

(d) whether the export of edible oil has led to increase in prices of edible oil for internal consumption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) As per the current Export-Import Policy, export of certain edible oils is permitted subject to licensing.

Having regard to the higher production of oilseeds and hence edible oils during the current year, the Government has decided to allow the export of all vegetable oils as listed in the said Import-Export Policy in consumer packs upto 5 kg. except in case of groundnut oil.

(c) and (d) No notification to this effect has been issued and as such the export of edible oil in consumer packs has not started. Thus the question of increase in prices of edible oils for internal consumption on account of export of edible oils does not arise.

Public Distribution System in Urban and Rural Areas

2435. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the break-up of rural and urban population separately served by Public Distribution System as on March, 1993 and how it compares with 1991 and 1992;

(b) what was the comparative off-take of foodgrains during the above period; and

(c) what steps have been taken to ensure availability of foodgrains at Public Distribution System, outlets mainly in the rural and tribal areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) The Public Distribution System (PDS) is universal in character from the Central Government's point of view. The entire population of the country, whether urban or rural, is entitled to draw commodities distributed through the PDS. The offtake of rice and wheat in 1990-91, 1991-92 and 1992-93 by the States/UTs for distribution through PDS is given below:—

(in lakh tonnes)

offtake of PDS by States/UTs

	Rice	Wheat
1990-91	76.67	69.00
1991-92	98.60	85.43
1992-93	91.58	72.17

States/UTs have been requested to make arrangements to deliver the PDS commodities at the doorsteps of the fair price shops (FPS). They have been requested to enforce strictly the provisions of Essential Commodities Act and